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SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/10/2018
TAGS: [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [KPAL](#) [EG](#)
SUBJECT: GAZA BORDER: GOE DOWNPLAYS JUNE 6 HAMAS
DEMONSTRATION

REF: CAIRO 1110

Classified By: ECPO Counselor Catherine Hill-Herndon for reason 1.4 (b)
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11. (C) On June 8, MFA Palestinian Affairs Director Badr Abdelatty downplayed the June 6 Hamas demonstration at the Palestinian Rafah border crossing, describing it as a "normal" and "predictable" way for Hamas to try to pressure Egypt on the current tahdiya ("calming") talks. Abdelatty said that the demonstration was a routine one following Friday prayers and was an attempt by Hamas to press the GOE into a more flexible negotiating position, specifically on opening the Rafah crossing. We noted press reports that 9,000 people demonstrated June 6, many more than the 200 demonstrators LAWIO recently told us have been participating in Friday demonstrations (reftel). Abdelatty said that the GOE was not concerned with the demonstration and noted that no Egyptian Border Guard Force soldiers were injured.

12. (C) LAWIO Chief MG Nagy also downplayed the demonstration in a June 6 conversation with us. He said that the GOE deployed additional Civilian Security Forces to the border, and he estimated that there were 1,000 Palestinian demonstrators.
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